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EDITORIAL—

For many years "silver" employees have worked with the impression that theirs must have been the responsibility for the greatest sins committed since their service and loyalty in this area has not been duly appreciated beyond words. This is an old story; as old as the Panama Canal itself. But it is increasingly evident that such an impression is not here to stay. Several acts committed by the Panama Canal Zone Administration in recent months are beginning to take effect on the membership of Local 713 and the officers have been able to feel satisfied with Union progress as regards these favorable changes.

One of the most pressing needs of the membership was the presence of an instrument through which their grievances could be heard and remedied. This need has been attended and, in most cases, the procedure set up for the purpose has proven of value and a real safeguard against abuse. Then there are the new regulations for sick and rest leave which are considerably improved over the old regulations. Here too the worker has found sufficient evidence of improvement in official consideration. And several other instances could be cited to show that Canal Zone officialdom, on the highest levels, sympathize with our cause.

On the other hand, there are a number of supervisors down the line who refuse to cooperate with any adjustment program where the unfortunate "silver" worker is concerned. These lose no time in an effort to make known their intention to hold on to the old-line philosophy of "white supremacy" in all avenues. On account of their attitudes some workers have been disposed to place their faith in the administration just so far and no further since whatever good is done can on many occasions be adulterated and sometimes nullified by the immediate supervisors. It is regrettable that this should be so. Such actions and attitudes on the part of supervisors and members contribute nothing towards the improvement of conditions and tend to continue a situation that is unhealthy in its every phase.

The recent announcements that civil service jobs will be open to Panamanians has caused such a commotion from the labor union of bosses (Metal Trades Council) that we feel glad they hadn't the chance to put into operation the McCarran Amendment. Whatever good there could be in that amendment would certainly have perished in their hands. The few in the "Silver" roll circles who paused to wonder on the possibilities of the amendment's good will being turned into concrete action by these bosses must have suffered much embarrassment when the "strong" leaders of the MTC began their sudden though well expected anti-Panamanian shouts of wrath.

But we can rest assured that the local administration will support and put into operation the action of the U.S. Government agencies. And this support would not be without precedent. We well remember the investigation conducted by the Congressional Committee in 1936 at the

FROM WHERE I STAND

By FOSTER BOURNES



Some of the Stewards of our Local Union have been under a veritable barrage of criticism lately because, so the story goes, they have not been doing a good job of "fronting" for the members they are supposed to represent. We should not be too eager to agree with this form of detraction because we know that it is so much easier to decry than to apply ourselves to the work at hand. We would rather take to the middle of the road in matters pertaining to the hasty condemnation of any of that group of individuals, mostly volunteers, who have tackled a job which calls for the investment of undelimited time, and brings a mountain of headaches without compensation.

The advent of unionism among "silver" workers is so novel that we should try to expand our understanding by learning as rapidly as we can the principles of union representation in sincere efforts, to foster a happier medium for all concerned. It will be quite some time before all Stewards will be completely liberated from the constriction of fear, because a man is unable to make himself over in a day.

The complexities of the job are legion, and a Steward, if conscientious, may be called upon to try his hand at being defender, negotiator, sagacious adviser and or interpreter—without training of any kind.

We aver that it would be unreasonable to expect a batting average of 1000% under existing conditions, nevertheless we believe that it is the duty of every Steward to tackle the assignment with assurance and with a view to improving the morale of every union member within his sphere. This will in turn make of the job less of a grind and more of an adventure. Also if we do this we will find that in the final analysis there is so little to fear. Human beings are not immune to consideration and if in the exercise of the duties incumbent on Ste-

wards we endeavor to find a medium for harmony we should be able to work beneficially even in the face of unreasoning opposition. In a word—lets endeavor to plant our feet on solid earth while working toward a basic understanding of problems as they arise. The watchword is: Let matter-of-fact realism be our guide.

During the war just ended President Roosevelt squelched his critics with these few words:—"We have to do the best we know to do at the moment. If it doesn't turn out right we can modify it as we go along." We should not be afraid of criticism if we are extending ourselves for progress of the Union.

Some few years ago the late President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was being heckled by a reporter who asked him if he was a Communist,

to which he answered "no". He was also asked if he was a Socialist; again Roosevelt answered "no". In apparent exasperation the intrepid reporter shot his bolt... "What then is your philosophy?" F.D.R. shot back: "Philosophy?" "I am a Christian and a Democrat." His was philosophy, therefore, which transcended love of self in the scramble of contemporary politics; and self-preservation. Is it any wonder then that the common people of all lands loved him so greatly—or that the voters of the nation returned him every term as champion of the underdog?

It is doubtful if Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his philosophy could save the world from catastrophe, but we believe and so state that his great and all-embracing love of humanity; his relentless struggle against oppression and finally his supreme sacrifice for the good of the whole world should be a cynosure for the eyes of his countrymen.

WITH THE ORGANIZERS



LABOR STRENGTH MAKES GOVERNMENTS STRONGER

Contrary to the opinion of a fist-full of ancient die-hards (Metal Trades Council) who have squawked about the auto replacing the horse and ox-cart in 1914 (see your Canal Zone history), it is our firm belief that an organized Canal Zone will not only correct many malpractices engaged in by the Metal Trades Council but will result in a general improvement of not only Panamanian and West Indian Labor but of North American Labor as well.

This same group (MTC) and a few others of like ilk have said for many years "You know these people, they're just not capable of learning anything, etc. etc. ad nauseam." Well, we say why squawk now so loud and vociferously when equal competition is offered in Civil Service examinations?

Edward Cheresh.

instigation of the MTC to determine whether the "alien" employees on the Canal Zone were a menace to the safety of the Panama Canal. At the investigation old Sam Whyte of the weak and puny PCWIEA roundly trounced Charles Wahl of the strong and powerful MTC and won the public commendations of the Congressional Committee Chairman.

In that investigation the Administration supported the retention of "silver" employees and made no bones about the loyalty these workers have manifested throughout their service. Is there any reasonable doubt that the Administration will again support a measure justly and fairly opened to members of the "silver" roll? We think not.

GREEK CIVIL SERVICE WORKERS ON STRIKE

ATHENS—(ALN)—All post offices and courts in the Greek capital were closed Jan. 23 as nearly 4,000 civil service workers went on strike for a 100% increase in pay. The government, which has been promising "social justice" to the workers while arresting elected union leaders and outlawing collective bargaining, has threatened severe measures unless strikers return.